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HD **EXPERTS ILLUMINATE DIVERSE CLIMATE CHANGE SOLUTIONS**

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By shipping heavy freight over long distance by rail instead of truck, CN customers avoided eight million tonnes of carbon-dioxide emissions in 2018 alone, a number that speaks to the considerable contribution of carbon-efficient transportation to the fight against climate change.

“Every year, we handle over 300 million tonnes of cargo, from the food we eat, the wood to build our homes, the cars we drive, the appliances that make our lives easier, and the energy to power our activities," says Janet Drysdale, vice-president, Corporate Development and Sustainability at CN. “Many of these goods are being transformed into more sustainable products, and we are moving them in a sustainable way."

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Marking CN's 100th anniversary, 2019 was a momentous year, she says. “We are inspired by our proud history of nation-building and committed to making a difference towards building a sustainable future today and for the next 100 years."

Ms. Drysdale, who is leading the company's carbon and conservation strategies, says, “Because of its environmental and economic advantages, we believe rail is an integral part of the climate change solution.

As a mover of the economy and enabler of trade, we are committed to playing a key role in the transition to a lower-carbon world."

She sees the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, which are integrated into the World Bank's Sustainable Mobility for All, as an opportunity to create a better world.

Canada has established an early leadership position in three significant science and innovation opportunities: carbon capture, utilization and storage (CCUS); hydrogen production for the industrial sector; and artificial intelligence (AI) for energy application, says Phil De Luna, program director at the National Research Council (NRC) Canada.

“All three areas need serious investment to scale and create impact," says Dr. De Luna, who is leading the seven-year collaborative Materials for Clean Fuels Challenge Program at the NRC. “The program has three thrusts: CO2 conversion, hydrogen production and AI for materials discovery.

We're building a brand new research facility in Mississauga – the first ever NRC research presence in the Greater Toronto Area. A large focus of this facility will be on developing new clean energy materials."

Dr. De Luna's mandate is to partner with the world's best academics and small and medium-sized enterprises – connecting the innovations of academia with the structure and scale of industry – to develop the high-risk, high-reward technologies that will help Canada meet its GHG emission reductions targets.

The program, as well as three other challenge programs developed by the NRC, is helping advance research related to Canadian priorities in collaboration with partners from the private and public sectors. “I'm tremendously excited about startups and firms working in the cleantech space," adds Dr. De Luna.

Growing awareness and attention on climate change are inspiring many Canadians to make lifestyle changes.

For Thomas Mueller, these measures – whether they relate to dietary or consumer choices – are reasons for hope. What's more, governments, corporations and other organizations are stepping up their own sustainability efforts.

As president and CEO of the Canada Green Building Council (CaGBC), Mr. Mueller believes that improving the environmental performance of buildings is a key aspect of climate action.

“We cannot meet our national carbon reduction targets without steps to reduce emissions from buildings," he says. “And we're excited to see cities and industry leaders set ambitious targets for things like improving energy performance and retrofitting existing buildings."

Sustainable building practices and technologies have seen significant advances over the last decade, and Mr. Mueller believes these solutions can help Canada meet its carbon reduction goals as well as drive socioeconomic opportunities, innovation and quality of life.

“Our research shows that zerocarbon buildings are not only technologically feasible – they are also financially viable," he says. “There is a common perception that sustainable buildings are cost-intensive, but leaders in the real estate sector, for example, report significant positive returns on investment for sustainable and energy-efficient buildings as well as retrofits."

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